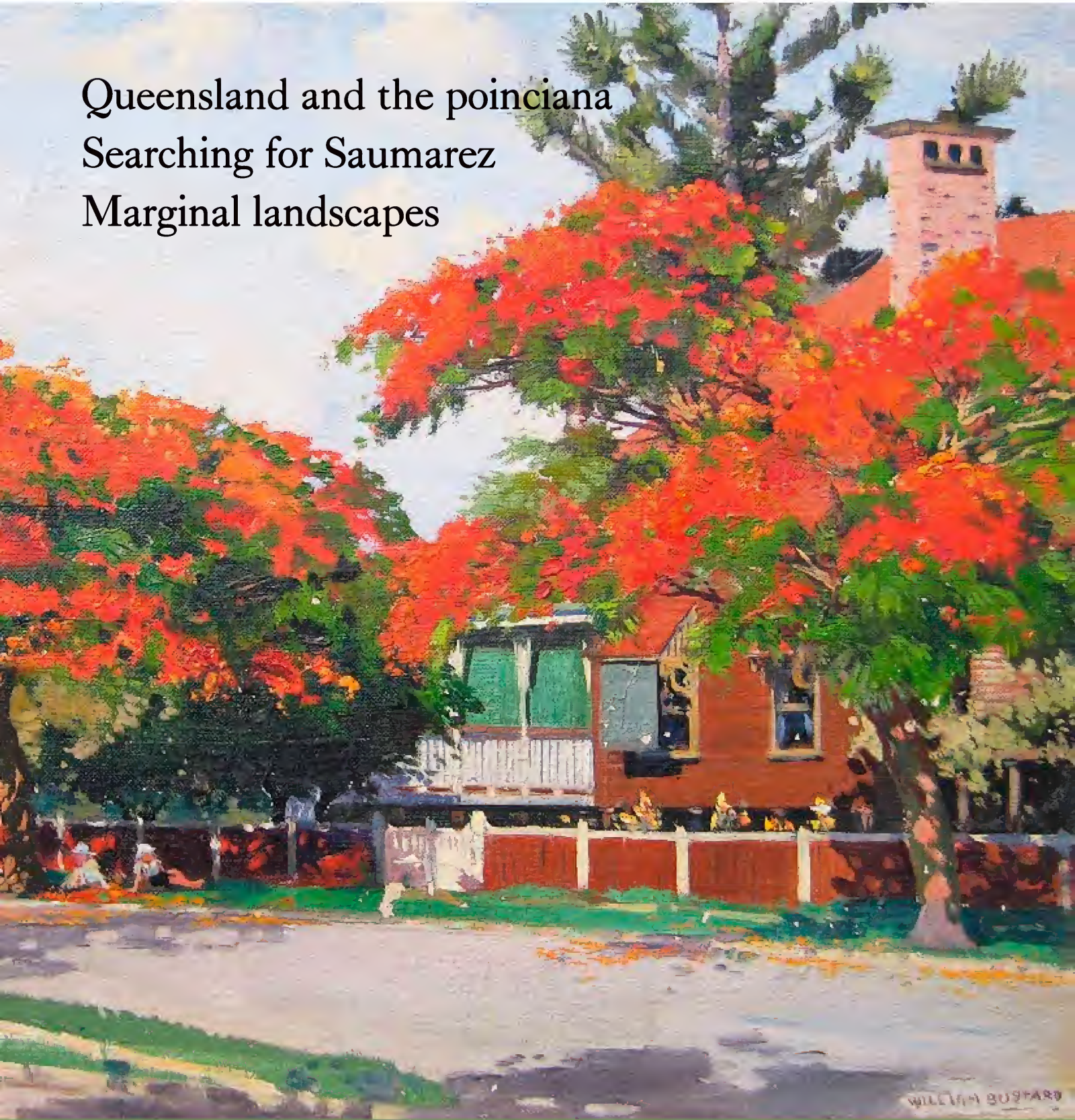


Australian Garden HISTORY

vol 29 no 2 October 2017

Queensland and the poinciana
Searching for Saumarez
Marginal landscapes



JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Mawallok

Peter Watts



Top: Photograph by John T Collins of 'Mawallock' (Mawallok), Beaufort, front of house, November 1982. John T Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Bottom: Computer-generated image of the larger towers in the revised application, which have been approved. Dennis Williamson, Scenic Spectrums Pty Ltd

In *Australian Garden History* in 2011 (vol 22 no 3) I was able to write that as a result of a panel hearing the previous year, 20 turbines (132 m in height) in the proposed Stockyard Hill wind farm near Beaufort in Victoria's Western District had been removed. This was a particularly sweet, if not perfect, victory since it kept the sublime view from the Mawallok terrace to the Pyrenees Ranges some 20 km away free from the visual impact of these gigantic towers.

Sadly some of those gains have now been lost. The applicant had sought permission, in 2016, to amend the planning permit and hence a further panel hearing was convened in 2016/17. The primary changes to the existing permit, at least those that concerned the views from the Mawallok terrace, were an increase in height of the turbines from 132 m to 180 m, an increase in the diameter of the blades from 104 m to 142 m, and the addition of a meteorological tower. Evidence was given that four turbines would now be visible from the terrace. This was rejected and the panel took the view that the four turbines were not visible from the single point on the terrace that the applicant presented in its case. Evidence presented that the turbines were very clearly visible from other parts of the terrace appears to have been rejected.

It seems an extraordinary interpretation that a long terrace in front of the house, designed by William Guilfoyle to capture the view into the landscape, should have but one single viewing point.

Architect and landscape architect **Dr Peter Watts AM** is a former chair and founding secretary of AGHS, and was founding director of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW (1981–2008). He is the author of *Edna Walling and her gardens* and *Historic gardens of Victoria*.

Notice of the society's AGM

Following the successful distribution of the AGHS annual report electronically in 2016, it will once again be available to read or download from our website, www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/

We hope that this way of distributing the annual report is an improvement for most members. It is in keeping with the general trend to make annual reports available electronically rather than in printed form.

If you would like a printed copy posted to you, please contact us at the national office on 1800 678 446 as soon as possible.

Cover This painting by Yorkshire-born painter and stained-glass artist William Bustard (1894–1973) celebrates the poinciana in a Queensland streetscape. 1940s (detail). By permission of the copyright holder.

ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY

Distributing our annual report in this way will continue to allow the society to make financial savings by reducing printing and postage costs.

There will be a limited number of copies available from the national office 14 days before the AGM, and at the AGM in Melbourne.

This year's AGM will be held on
Friday 27 October 2017
from 12.25 pm at the
State Library of Victoria Theatre,
179 La Trobe Street, Melbourne

Editorial

Bernadette Hince



This issue of *Australian Garden History* shows the usual glorious span of topics we think of as ‘garden history’, from town planner Max Nankervis’s personal reminiscences of a Melbourne garden to Liz Chappell’s quest for the story behind the name Saumarez in northern New South Wales, site of vigorous AGHS activity with its heritage rose garden project.

Both geographic and historical spans are evident too, in the scope of this issue’s articles. They reach from Queensland’s

tropics today to Kangaroo Island’s earliest European garden history. Trevor Pitkin looks at Joseph Sayce, unheralded landscape designer of Melbourne’s Domain, and Peter Watts has news of developments affecting the western Victorian property Mawallock. Matthew Higgins writes of the remarkable program of experimental tree plantings in arboreta around the Australian Capital Territory, a significant historical and botanical resource largely lost to us after the bushfires of 2003.

What exactly do we mean by the ‘Australian’ component of the society’s name? Both John Dwyer and Glenn Cooke write about the substantial presence in our culture, history and landscapes of introduced trees – the willow and the Christmas-coloured poinciana, respectively. Ben Wilkie examines the influence of Scottish botanists in Australia.

It is exciting to anticipate the annual national conference taking place in Melbourne in a few weeks. The talks on Friday 27 October 2017 at the State Library of Victoria will provide a forum for examining the effects of pressures on public and private gardens and cultural landscapes. As the conference organisers say, the extraordinary growth of Melbourne in the 1880s provided the wealth to create mansions and gardens and engendered the civic pride that inspired the development of the city’s grand parks and avenues.

The conference will explore the social and economic pressures which affected these early foundations. It will also look at the challenges for conservation, urban planning and garden design in adapting to change. Our annual general meeting will be held, as usual, during the conference. We encourage you to look at the annual report beforehand (it’s available from the AGHS website, and we try to keep it as brief as possible).

The two days of garden visits on Saturday and Sunday 28–29 October 2017 will show delegates gardens ranging from the grand to the small and experimental, and Monday’s optional day tour will explore the Dandenong Ranges.

The year 2017 has been one of very hard work for the various committees of AGHS. By its nature, most of this is behind the scenes. I am in awe of the deep commitment and energy shown by everyone involved. The remarkable skills and expertise people bring to the society – on a voluntary level – promises well for the years ahead, as we draw nearer to our 2020 celebrations of 40 years of the Australian Garden History Society.

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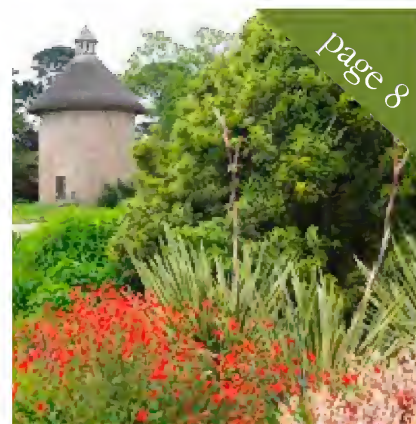


photo Elton Squires



Glenn R Cooke

The poinciana: icon of a Queensland summer

Two icons of Queensland: house in Wilston, Brisbane, with seed pods from last year's display and the poinciana just ready to burst into full bloom.

photo Glenn Cooke

The poinciana has made a considerable contribution to the tropical image of Queensland and to the development of tourism there. Its wide plantings have also given it a central place in the memories and imaginations of many Australians.

In 2010 Shay Stafford published *Memoirs of a Showgirl: From Brisvegas to Paris* in which she described her career as principal dancer on the stages of famous Parisian nightclubs the Moulin Rouge and the Lido. (As well as being an affectionate name for Brisbane, 'Brisvegas' is also the name of one of the most intensely coloured poinciana cultivars.) She recalled the enthusiasm of her six-year-old self after her first dance school recital in December 1980:

After the concert we went to my grandparents' house. Ma and Pa lived not far from us in a beautiful old Queenslander in Longueville Street. The weatherboard house stood high on stilts, raised high above the ground.

In the backyard next to Pa's incinerator stood a huge Poinciana tree. Pa grabbed his instamatic, took me into the garden, and shot a whole roll of film of me posing in my recital costume ... I struck a series of poses: me under the Poinciana tree, me next to the Hills hoist ...

The elements of a Queensland summer are encapsulated in her memory. For most of the 20th century the setting would have been as familiar to children growing up in hundreds, if not thousands of homes, scattered along Queensland's eastern seaboard.

Although the poinciana has been in cultivation since the 19th century, it was rediscovered in 1932 in the dry, deciduous forests of its native Madagascar. It is endangered there because of slash and burn agriculture, but the striking scarlet blooms have made it a popular street tree in tropical and subtropical areas of the world.

It was previously placed in the genus *Poinciana*, named for Phillippe de Longvilliers de Poincy, 17th century governor of Saint Christophe, and was renamed *Delonix regia* by William Hooker



The Glowing Glory of the Poinciana Regia.

who was Regius Professor of Botany at Glasgow University and later Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

Australian beginnings

The jacaranda had its first Australian 'home' in the City Botanic Gardens, Brisbane, but has spread its accommodating mauve clouds of late spring colour to southern states and is coddled as far south as Tasmania. The poinciana called Brisbane 'home' a decade earlier! It can tolerate drought and salty conditions but requires a tropical or near-tropical climate and doesn't thrive much further south than the Queensland border. Like the jacaranda we also have Walter Hill, then Director of the Gardens, to thank for its introduction. He reported on his success in growing it to Queensland's Legislative Assembly in 1866¹ and recommended it as a shade tree for street plantings shortly thereafter. It was available through Brisbane nurseries two years later and within a decade the poinciana outside the Rockhampton courthouse 'grows to perfection here and flowers magnificently'.²

Flowering trees are a distinct feature of tropical gardens:

The first sight of the Sydney Gardens is not so striking as that of the Brisbane ones. There is a great deal more leaf mid a great deal less flower on view. You recognise the beauty of the plants of the temperate zone ...



Left: 'The Glowing Glory of the Poinciana Regia' – illustrated front cover from *The Queenslander*, 8 January 1931.

Courtesy State Library of Queensland

Right: Queensland Government Tourist Bureau folder, 1953. collection of the author

but they are all small, and one searches in vain for the huge poinciana, jacaranda, lagerstroemia, stenocarpus, and other mountains of flowers which adorn our Brisbane reserve.³

The flamboyant poinciana integrated itself into the visual and cultural life of Brisbane.

Just at the present time we have a tree in full bloom which claims the beauty title in louder tones, and that is the poinciana. It may be seen in its insistent scarlet colouring in many parts of Brisbane, but nowhere is there a more perfect specimen than in the park opposite the Brisbane General Hospital. The vivid red against a background of verdant green fern-like foliage surely establishes Queensland's claim to floral superiority over the other States.⁴

And although there were larger trees to be found, the curator of the Botanic Gardens in 1929, Mr E Bick, averred that 'none flower better or [are] more shapely' than the specimen of poinciana at Bowen Park.⁵

An emblematic tree

The Brisbane City Hall, built as a symbol of the unification of 20 local authorities to form the Brisbane City Council, was opened in 1930. At the same time the Horticultural Society of Queensland conducted a ballot to adopt a floral emblem for the city. The poinciana was the third in the selection and lost out to the poinsettia because the latter was at its peak during the



'Avenues of colour' – poinciana trees in full bloom in Wellington Point in 2014.
Redlands City Bulletin, 26 November 2014



Arthur Evan Read watercolour reproduced in *The Courier Mail annual*, 1963.
collection of the author



Greetings from Cairns postcard, ca 1960s. collection of the author

winter tourist season. Then Brisbane poet Emily Bulcock (1877–1969) produced one of her three poems celebrating the poinciana, quoted in the *Brisbane Telegraph* of 8 December 1951:

Queen of our trees; — she lifts her crown of splendour,
Like scarlet parasol; soft fringed with green:
She throws to drought and dust a proud defiance.
Her roots go deep; and draw from strength unseen.

In northern Queensland the poinciana also made its impact. A memorial avenue incorporating poincianas was planted along Sheridan Street, Cairns, in 1931 and the poincianas in the suburb of Edge Hill were deemed a 'wonderful sight'.⁶ There was a suggestion that Cairns could be the focus of a poinciana festival in the same manner that Grafton celebrated its jacaranda festival, but the town of Townsville eventually claimed the poinciana instead.⁷

The importance of the poinciana to the streetscape of Townsville had been diminishing.

There are only a few left now. Old-timers will remember the magnificent specimen which grew in The Avenue at Hermit Park and many others which grew around the city. There are still a few left, and two worthy of note are at the side of the Royal Oak Hotel. Both are in full bloom, and what a sight.⁸

This loss of interest was reversed when the Townsville and District Tourist Development League launched its 'Plant Poinciana Week' and established the poinciana as the city's flower in 1952. Local resident Malcolm Tattersall later noted:

Poincianas are not native trees but they are so much a part of Townsville's ambience that it's hard to imagine the town without them. They were widely planted both in gardens and as street trees until the fashion swung towards native species, and there are still lots around. Our own street is a product of the post-war building boom so the trees on the footpath are baby-boomers too.⁹

The *Australian Women's Weekly* of 10 July 1968 wrote 'Lovely little beaches have avenues of flaming Poinciana trees and age-old mangoes to shade the parking areas, always with glimpses of the sea and wooded islands', describing a trip from Cairns to Cooktown. This evocative text is echoed by Arthur Evan Read's 1963 watercolour.

In 2006 the Queensland presenter of the ABC program *Gardening Australia*, the well-known Colin Campbell, remarked:

If asked to name a single tree that's helped shape the character of Brisbane, it would be the magnificent poinciana *Delonix regia*. In years gone by it was traditionally planted as a street tree and now enhances a lot of the city's older suburbs.



We have Harry Oakman (1906–2002) to thank. He was Director of the Brisbane City Council Parks Department for 16 years in the post World War II period and responsible for planting a host of trees on Brisbane's formerly bare street verges. This practice was carried through to the nearby bayside suburbs of Redlands.

The poinciana succeeds the jacaranda in the cycle of the seasons, and a quotation in Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin* of 22 December 1938 amusingly comments on its progress from a dormant state:

More flauntingly audacious is Poinciana regia which greets the coming of Christmas with a riot of crimson bloom. For this visitor from Madagascar is an extremist, and goes in a few weeks from a state of gaunt, unashamed nakedness to one of reckless overdressing.

Spring rains encourage the development of foliage rather than flowers. If you visited Wellington Point in the summer of 2014 you would have been treated to a magnificent display of blossoms as it was in near-drought conditions.

The poinciana is in full bloom at Christmas but the individual flowers, as beautiful as orchids, quickly wilt in arrangements. As Malcolm Tattersall hinted at, there is a little embarrassment about having an exotic considered an iconic tree, but this is easily ignored when you appreciate the

spectacle it provides. The poinciana is generous in its spread and is best seen as an individual specimen but is now greatly at risk in populated centres as open backyards are giving way to townhouse and unit developments. However, every summer the poinciana still colours Queensland towns and cities with its startling scarlet and orange.

The generous spread of the poinciana is demonstrated when trees planted opposite each other overlap in the middle of Bristol Street, West End, Brisbane.

photo Glenn Cooke

- 1 *Brisbane Courier*, 18 April 1866 and 10 December 1866
- 2 *Telegraph*, Brisbane, 4 Dec 1877
- 3 *Brisbane Courier*, 17 May 1879
- 4 *Brisbane Courier*, 20 December 1927
- 5 *Brisbane Courier*, 20 December 1929
- 6 *Northern Herald*, Cairns, 2 May 1931 and *Cairns Post*, 30 November 1935
- 7 *Cairns Post*, 11 December 1952
- 8 *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 8 November 1951
- 9 <http://malcolmtattersall.com.au/wp/2013/11/poinciana-flower/>

Glenn R Cooke was appointed as the first curator of decorative arts at the Queensland Art Gallery in 1981. He retired as research curator, Queensland Heritage, in 2013. He has published extensively on aspects of the fine and decorative arts and has been actively involved in AGHS since 1995. Glenn is an enthusiastic collector, gardener and ballroom dancer.



Liz Chappell

Searching for Saumarez

'Misty morning',
Heritage Rose
Garden at Saumarez
Homestead, Armidale,
established by
members of AGHS
Northern NSW.
photo Lynne Walker

Establishing the Heritage Rose Garden at Saumarez homestead in Armidale kindled a greater interest in the origins of this property and its founders, the Dumaresq brothers, among members of AGHS in northern NSW. So the opportunity to visit the original Saumarez in the Channel Islands beckoned. But which one was it?

A search of notable gardens on the Islands turned up three possibilities: Samarès Manor on the island of Jersey, and Saumarez Park and Saumarez Manor on the island of Guernsey. Armidale historian and member of the National Trust Saumarez advisory committee Jillian Oppenheimer had researched the Dumaresq family papers and soon put us onto the right path to Samarès Manor in Jersey. Mrs Oppenheimer was instrumental in Saumarez Homestead, Armidale, becoming a National Trust property in 1983.

Samarès Manor

The Norman Conquest of the Channel Islands predates the conquest of England in 1066. Jersey is but 25 kilometres from the coast of France and was once part of the European continent. The name Saumarez and its variations mean 'salt marshes'. French author Victor Hugo, who lived in exile on Guernsey in the late 19th century, described the islands as 'little pieces of France, dropped into the sea and picked up by England'.

The Dumaresqs came to Jersey in the 13th century, possibly to escape persecution for their Huguenot religion. In 1500 John Dumaresq married Mabel Payn, daughter of the seigneur of the ancient fiefdom of Samarès, thus beginning eight generations of Dumaresq seigneurs (lords of the manor) at Samarès. Dumaresq tenure 'daughtered out' in 1734 when Deborah Dumaresq died without issue, despite great effort to continue the Dumaresq name by encouraging her marriage to a distant cousin, Phillip Dumaresq.

It was Deborah's father Philippe Dumaresq who began the gardens at Samarès. He was a friend of John Evelyn, the English diarist and author of *Sylva: Or a discourse of forest-trees*. From their correspondence we know that Phillipe dug a canal a half a mile long to improve the marshland, and that he planted 'scores of cypress', alders and a vineyard which was still in existence 70 years later.

In 1677 a visitor described Samarès manor grounds as 'artificially contrived and neatly built with handsome gardens, great orchards and good meadows belonging to it'.

Little remains of the manor house from Dumaresq's tenure at Samarès except the crypt, parts of which date back to the 12th century, originally built as a storeroom or undercroft of the present manor house. The 16th century colombier, or dovecote, was rethatched in an authentic style in 2008.

However, the manor and gardens we see today are largely due to a later seigneur, shipping magnate Sir James Knott, who purchased Samarès in 1924 and spent £50,000 on the gardens as well as substantially rebuilding the manor house. The Japanese gardens constructed in 1930, the camellia gardens and formal lily pond are all from this time.

Current seigneur of Samarès, Vincent Obbard, stepson of Sir James Knott, engaged noted English designer John Brookes to reinvigorate the medieval walled gardens in 2007. One of the most comprehensive collections of medieval herbs now

flourishes in this sheltered environment, alongside a splendid display of David Austin roses planted in a formal grid pattern. These are best appreciated from a purpose-built viewing platform.

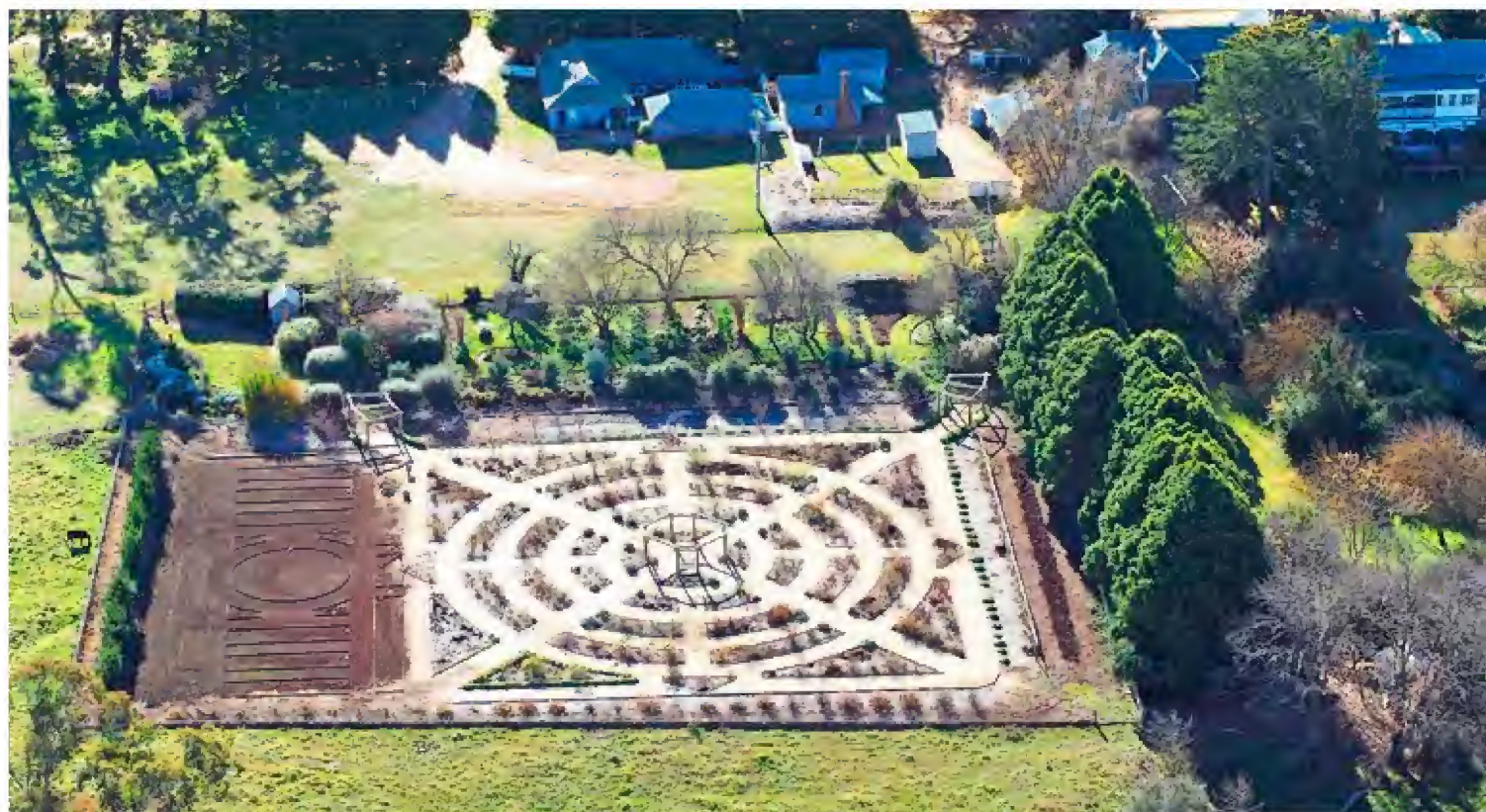
The title Seigneur (or Dame if the incumbent is a woman), meaning Lord of the Manor, rests with the property rather than family lineage. The Baron de Saumarez, an English hereditary peer, once resided at Saumarez Park on Guernsey. The seventh Baron, Eric de Saumarez, lives in retirement on Guernsey, although the estate is now a government-owned aged-care home. Jersey and Guernsey are both self-governing bailiwicks with allegiance to the British crown but not its parliament. The smaller islands of Helm, Sark and Alderney are under the administration of Guernsey.

The Channel Islands were the only part of Britain to be occupied by German forces during World War II. After the evacuation of allied troops from Dunkirk in June 1940, Winston Churchill declared the islands indefensible, withdrew the British garrison and offered the civilian population refuge in England. From a population of around 92,000, 34,000 islanders, including most of the children, spent the next five years in England. The remainder spent the war on their islands, most on Jersey or Guernsey.

Initially this was a 'model occupation' by specially chosen soldiers, often fluent English-speakers, cultured and well educated. Propaganda films portrayed a harmonious life under German rule.

Aerial view of Saumarez, showing the stage two garden of Australian Rose Breeders laid out on the left. This new project, enabled by a grant from Armidale Regional Council, is due for completion in August 2018.

photo Elton Squires



The islands formed part of Hitler's Atlantic wall of defence and the intense fortifications are still evident on both Jersey and Guernsey. However, during the final year of the war conditions in the Channel Islands were dire, for both the civilian population and the German military.

Bypassed after the D-Day landings, supply lines from Europe were cut and the British government was reluctant to send supplies, expecting they would fall into the hands of the occupying Germans rather than the needy civilians.

Samarès Manor was spared occupation and possible damage from German troops through the persuasion of its resident housekeeper Miss White,

who convinced them to list the manor as a 'site of special interest'. Unlike most mature trees across the Channel Islands that were felled for firewood in the last winter of the war, the venerable Oriental plane (*Platanus orientalis*), swamp cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and many other significant trees at Samarès were untouched. The family were of course very grateful to Miss White. Local history has not judged her so favourably. She is listed in the Jersey War Tunnels Museum among 'those who collaborated'.

On Guernsey, Saumarez Park and Sausmarez Manor had similarly fortunate outcomes with their stately houses and extensive grounds relatively unscathed by the German occupation.

Left top: Herb and kitchen garden at Samarès Manor garden, designed by John Brookes.

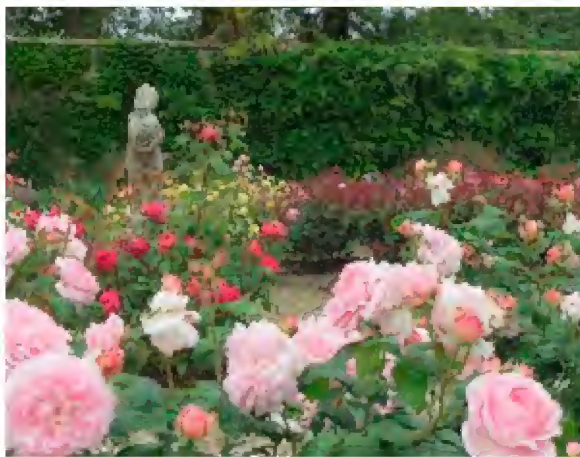
Left middle: The medieval walled garden at Samarès Manor is now filled with David Austin roses.

Left bottom: Pond at Samarès Manor, Jersey, installed by Sir James Knott.

Right top: The thatched colombier (dovecote) at Samarès Manor dates to the 16th century.

Right bottom: Samarès Manor, Jersey. Present manor house, renovated by Sir James Knott 1925–1934.

photos Elton Squires



Saumarez Park was used as headquarters for Organisation Todt, the engineering arm of the German army responsible for the construction of fortifications on the islands using slave labour, mostly prisoners of war from Eastern Europe. Saumarez Manor was of no interest to the occupying forces because it did not have electricity connected.

The Australian connection

The Dumaresq brothers Henry, William and Edward, who came to Australia in 1825, were all born in Shropshire, England, and were a generation removed from Jersey. We have no evidence to suggest they ever visited their ancestral home.

Henry and William attended the Royal Military College, Great Marlow, and Edward attended Sandhurst. All followed the footsteps of their father, John, into the British Army. Henry rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and was wounded at the Battle of Waterloo. William became a captain. Their sister Eliza married Sir Ralph Darling who was appointed governor of New South Wales in 1825. Henry was his private secretary, travelling with Darling to Mauritius, and then to Australia to make preparations ahead of the vice-regal party. William arrived in New South Wales with his regiment later in the same year as the new governor. The youngest brother Edward travelled from England with Governor Darling but disembarked in Van Diemen's Land to take up, temporarily, the position of Surveyor-General.



The brothers' affiliation with their ancestral home must have remained extraordinarily strong. Henry took up land near Muswellbrook in the Hunter Valley and named his property St Helier (after the principal town of Jersey). In 1829, William resigned his commission and established a property near Scone named St Aubin (the other major town on Jersey). Edward's descendants still occupy the farmland in Tasmania he selected and named Saumarez.

In New England

Henry was one of the first European settlers in New England in 1833 when it was still declared 'beyond the boundaries of location'. His holding of an estimated 100,000 acres that he named Saumarez was well established before the first Commissioner of Lands to New England, George James Macdonald, arrived in 1837. Henry handed over management of grazing interests to his brother William when he was appointed Commissioner of the Australian Agricultural Company in 1834. He died in 1838 at Port Stephens as a result of the movement of a musket ball lodged in his lung since the Battle of Waterloo.

Neither Henry nor William made their home at Saumarez. William built a splendid mansion called 'Tivoli' at Rose Bay in Sydney. This is now part of Kambala Anglican girl's school. The first homestead on Saumarez was a wooden building made for their managers, the last being JA Macinnis. It had a wooden shingle roof and glass-panelled French doors leading onto a long verandah. The fenced garden was already planted with fruit trees when the second owner, Henry Arding Thomas, arrived with his wife Caroline and baby son in 1857.

'Fleas reign here in abundance. Garden much out of order and the house dreadfully dirty', was how Caroline Thomas described it in her diary (*Caroline's diary*, Anne Philp 2015).

The two-storey Edwardian homestead at Saumarez, now owned by the National Trust of Australia (NSW), was built for the third owner, Francis John White. Tennis courts, a picking garden and orchard were complemented by a formal front garden, largely extant. The Heritage Rose Garden's double row of crabapples pays tribute to the site of the former orchard.

Liz Chappell is the author of *Celebrate the seasons: garden memoirs from New England*. She was regional coordinator, northern New South Wales, for Australia's Open Garden Scheme 2006–10 and is currently co-deputy Chair of AGHS Northern NSW. She visited the Channel Islands in 2016.



Julie Tolley

Convicts and cabbages

EC Frome
watercolour
'Kingscote, Kangaroo
Island 1840'. Edward
Charles Frome visited
the island and made
several paintings
of Kingscote and
Nepean Bay.
Art Gallery of South
Australia

When the first English settlers arrived in South Australia, their highest priority was to grow produce for their own consumption. Evidence from official government documents, diaries, ship logs and newspapers shows that Kangaroo Island has a long history of productive gardens and small farms with a wide variety of fruit, flowers and vegetables, and also wine grapes grown by whalers and sealers, convicts and early colonists who arrived in the 1830s.

Kangaroo Island, 155 kilometres long and 55 kilometres wide, is situated off the Fleurieu Peninsula of South Australia. It was named by Captain Matthew Flinders in 1802, when he was exploring and mapping the coast of southern Australia.

The first English-speaking settlers were sealers, whalers and escaped convicts, who came to live on the island in the early 1800s. They traded sealskins for provisions when ships arrived at the island. Some had small farms and planted crops and grew vegetables, including cabbages.

Early gardens

Henry Wallen, a sailor, arrived on the island in the early 1800s. There are many conflicting stories about Wallen and as yet, no substantial written accounts of his early life. By 1836 he had established a large farm at Three Well River, now

known as Cygnet River. He cultivated his land and grew a variety of vegetables.

An extensive article in the *Hobart Town Gazette* in 1826 described a small collection of farms in the area:

When the fishing season for seals is over, these men, with the native women and their offspring amounting, in all to about 40, retire into a valley in the interior of the island, where they have a garden and huts.

On 20 December 1831 Captain John Hart anchored his schooner *Elizabeth* in Nepean Bay. In a letter to Charles La Trobe, Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, he wrote:

The sailors cultivated a small garden to supply them with potatoes, onions, and a small patch of barley for their poultry.

By 1836, the South Australian Company had been formed in London with the purpose of establishing a British province in southern Australia. The first South Australian Company ship to arrive at the island was the *Duke of York* on 27 July 1836, with many passengers who were employed by the company to establish the colony. They included Thomas Beare (Superintendent of Buildings), Samuel Stephens (the first Colonial Manager) and Charles Powell, the company's gardener. In his old age, Powell was interviewed about life on the island for Adelaide's *Evening Journal*, 1898. The company, he said, supplied him with:

Nearly every description of vegetable seeds; the Company also put on board apple, pear, and plum trees. I therefore commenced my gardening operations, and soon had many kinds of seeds in the

ground, and the headway they made and the size attained in comparison with what would have been the case in England under similar circumstances were remarkable. The inhabitants of the island could not consume the Vegetables raised, and the surplus was sent in boats to the mainland. The fruit-trees and vines also did well and from what I have heard some of them are bearing fruit yet.

Samuel Stephens' diary entry for 2 August 1836 described his encounter with the sailors John Day and Henry Wallen.

Met Day and Wallen. They seem very industrious and steady people having a nice little farm of about 5 acres (two of which are under a fine crop of wheat), 8 or 10 pigs, some poultry and various vegetables, brought away a bag of turnips.

The log book of Robert Morgan, captain of the *Duke of York*, provided further evidence of Wallen's plantings.

His farm was closed in with piles drove in the ground containing about five acres of wheat, some turnips cabbages onions and a few potatoes they have pigs and fowls and a fine cat.

In April 1836, John Wrathall Bull, stock dealer and land-owner, arrived in South Australia. His experiences were published in a lively and interesting book which described Kingscote.

The new emigrants were met by some of the sealers and, brought a splendid supply of vegetables, including a quantity of very fine water melons. Though not quite ripe, these were quickly disposed of. The seeds of vegetables were sown, and soon green food was indulged in.

Dr John Woodforde arrived aboard the brig *Rapid* in August 1836. Before he moved to Adelaide, he spent some time on the island and visited Wallen's farm, noting in his diary:

The men remain at their little farms on the Island. One of these by the name of Walland has a farm about seven miles up the river, which does him great credit as he has several acres of flourishing wheat and most of the English vegetables.

Mr John Morphett, a representative of the South Australian Company, also saw Wallen's property. A letter written by Morphett to the company office in London confirmed the extensive farming on the island:

I went last week up the river being farmed by two sealers. They have about five acres under cultivation and grow potatoes, turnips, cabbages,



Top: Historic mulberry tree at Reeves Point, Kingscote, Kangaroo Island, in 2017. A mulberry propagated from this one was planted nearby in 1986, according to a plaque on the younger tree.

photo
Bernadette Hince



Middle: Sketch of grass trees of the Xanthorrhoeaceae family, commonly known as yaccas or blackboys, Kangaroo Island, ca 1865. Grass trees remain a distinctive element in the island's landscapes today.

State Library of
South Australia



Bottom:
Colourised postcard showing the boat harbour at Kingscote, Kangaroo Island, ca 1900.

State Library of
South Australia
B 72754

water melons, onions, wheat and barley. The vegetables are all good. We purchased turnips from them at sixpence a dozen.

The 1837 report of the South Australian Company included details of vegetable growing observed in December 1836:

Decided to explore one of the sealers' farms who had lived there for 18 years. Arrived at the farm, which had been the object of our long and difficult journey. We found four acres of very fine wheat, and a large kitchen garden filled with every description of vegetable as in England. (met by Messrs. W and D.)



Left: William Light watercolour ca 1836 'Mr Beare and a few others had pitched their tents'.

The *Duke of York* arrived at Nepean Bay on 27 June 1836. The Beare family of six was among its passengers, including Thomas Hudson Beare, his wife Lucy and four children. Thomas Beare was appointed as Deputy Colonial Manager and Building Superintendent for the South Australian Company.

State Library of South Australia B 72756

Right: Pencil and wash drawing by George French Angas, 'Kingscote, Nepean Bay, Kangaroo I[island], So[uth] A[ustralia]'.

National Library of Australia PIC Solander box A14 R6417



It is likely that Messrs W and D were Henry Wallen and William Day, who had been on the island for many years.

William Archer Deacon landed on the island in 1836. He too was employed by the South Australian Company to establish a 'Coffee house and Hotel.' A letter written on board the *Africaine* described one of his days.

1836 Nov 2nd All landed safe at Nepean Bay, sandy, plenty of wood, hard as iron, no fruit to be seen, but currants growing on a large tree. I have planted potatoes round my tent half a bushel of potatoes which cost 6/-.

Obviously Deacon was unfamiliar with fruit trees or currants.

The Kingscote settlement

William Giles arrived at Kingscote with his second wife and ten children in the *Hartley* on 16 October 1837. He was employed as manager of the South Australian Company on Kangaroo Island and was also the Superintendent of Agriculture, Flocks and Bank, Kangaroo Island. Giles' eldest daughter Jane was 13 when she left England with the family.

Jane described the excitement of the passengers on arriving at Kangaroo Island after five months at sea. There were houses, several cottages, workshops and stores and she was surprised at the neat appearance of the settlement. In her diary she described Kingscote:

The superintendent's house had, some two or three acres of land, already fenced in and laid out neatly for a garden, with white gate all complete, where vegetables and a few flowers, principally double stocks were growing luxuriantly.

In August 1836, Colonel Light decided that the island was unsuitable and gradually the South Australian Company withdrew its financial support and most of the settlers moved to the mainland.

Lady Jane

Lady Jane Franklin, indefatigable traveller and wife of Sir John Franklin, Governor of Van Diemen's Land, visited the island in January 1841. That year a census records 77 males, 18 females and 13 'native' women on the island, and about 70 acres of land under cultivation.

Entries in Lady Jane's diary described the buildings, houses and gardens at Reeves Point, Kingscote, in 1841.

15th January We ascended a footpath along the face of the cliff ... on which the Company's Government house is erected and which overlooks an inclosure of near[]y 3 acres of sloping garden ground.

Mr Woodroffe, an agent for the South Australian Company, had lived on the island for two years. Lady Franklin took a great interest in his garden:

Mr. Woodroffe took us thro' the garden which contains some cabbages and onions, some water-melons and a few almond trees which want pruning and yield nothing He has had little better than pure



sand, below the garden fence and even a tolerable show of turnips – But what he most boasted of was his radishes, which grow to a surprising size and yet are extremely mild.

Given that radishes have such limited culinary use and generally lack universal taste appeal, they seem an interesting choice for the garden.

Kangaroo Island's population gradually dwindled, but due to its isolation, it became a popular location for smugglers. In 1844, Inspector Tolmer and eight police landed at Kingscote to arrest law-breakers. Tolmer narrated his adventures in a series of articles in the *South Australian Register*. He also provided more evidence of vegetable production by several inhabitants, including Buck, Mr Potts and two brothers named Gardiner at American River.

These persons have cleared land of scrub, and have cultivated for their own consumption. The soil is excellent, and the crops looked well.

At Threewell River about 100 acres of scrubby land have been cleared, and 40 or 50 acres are cultivated. The soil is excellent, and the crops of both of corn and vegetables have been abundant and good. There is only one horse on the island, but it is big enough for two.

Smugglers were captured by police at Western River where there was a stone house and cultivated land.

There was also a field with four acres of wheat, and a nice garden with vegetables, all growing luxuriantly.

The houses at Kingscote are built upon the face of a hill ... There are good gardens attached to the houses. The whole scene as viewed from the sea, is beautiful and picturesque.

By the late 1840s, the company had lost interest in the settlement and many of the agricultural, mining and fishing industries had either been closed down or moved to the mainland. Very little remains of the settlement's houses and gardens, except for one huge mulberry tree at Reeves Point, which still bears fruit today.

View from Kangaroo Island of the narrow strait between the island and the mainland, Backstairs Passage. Wood engraving from *The illustrated Australian news for home readers*, 1872. State Library of Victoria

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Dr Julie Tolley is a social historian. Her doctorate, 'Stewed cockatoo and a glass of grenache', is a history of women in the South Australian wine industry. She has written extensively, has been published both nationally and internationally, and has lectured at the University of South Australia and the University of Adelaide. Julie is currently researching the lives of South Australian women who emigrated to Paraguay in 1893.



Trevor Pitkin

Traces of Sayce

Photograph of a painting of Joseph Sayce's home 'Edenthorpe' at Caulfield, Melbourne, ca 1870.

photo (and possibly also watercolour painting) William Tibbits.

State Library of Victoria

'Who is Mr Sayce? What are the particular qualities that recommended him to the notice of the Minister of Lands as a fitting person to superintend the ornamentation of the new Government Domain?'

So asks Melbourne's *Leader* newspaper in July 1873 at the height of the angst over the development of said Domain. Not being a public figure, Joseph Sayce is still obscure in relation to the highly rated and documented landscapers of his day. I had to know more...

John Sayce, a Quaker, is operating a joint drapery and tailoring business, Sayce and Jesper, in Stockport, Middlesex in 1825. His two elder sons, Edward and Joseph, follow him into the

same line of business, while the third, George, turns his hand to selling tea, and remains in England. Edward and Joseph also become part of the Quaker Society of Friends, and both eventually emigrate to Australia. With similar starting points, Edward and Joseph travelled rather different paths.

Edward first came to Melbourne in 1841, well ahead of any of the gold fever that was to arrive a decade later. Quakers had been migrating to Australia, mainly to Hobart, Sydney and Adelaide, from as early as 1790. Their motivations ran across health, travel and adventure, poverty (especially the Irish) and, later, the robust commercial opportunities in Melbourne. With the help of George Yates (a Quaker in Melbourne), Edward set up a mercantile business dealing in glass, china, and flour factoring, not involving himself in tailoring in the colony.

However, he did dedicate himself to the establishment of a Quaker Meeting in Melbourne, and attracted the claim of being one of the founding fathers of Australian Quakerism. He closed his business venture and returned to England for nine years while his eldest were educated at Ackworth, and ministered to various Meetings across England, arriving back in Melbourne in 1862.

Joseph Sayce, master tailor

Joseph Sayce built up his drapery and tailoring business in England until 1852, when he emigrated with his wife Emma and their two children. He moved from Middlesex to Cornhill, London in 1846/47, where just before his departure he was registered on a census as employing 45 staff. In 1848 he registered his design for 'An Easy Morning Coat' he named the 'Toina', which seems to deal with flexibility of construction as well as comfort while walking. His business activities run to bankruptcy and failure to pay debts before leaving England, events which cause the Cheshire Meeting to disown him, reunite him and then disown him once more. Despite this his family remained on the register until they either resigned (his wife in 1865) or were disunited through lack of interest.

Sayce's changing interests

On arrival in Australia, Joseph presents as a gentleman, or at least uninvolved in any trade activity from his previous life in England. Barely two years in Melbourne, he lodges the ninth patent application registered in the colony in late 1854 jointly with a Mount Alexander digger Edward Potts, related to crushing and amalgamating auriferous and argentiferous ores. This patent seems not to have been granted but it was not deemed 'not granted', meaning its status is uncertain. Daw and Co were recorded as manufacturers of this invention, but by 1855 the partnership with Potts was dissolved and presumably the venture as well. In the patent document Sayce is listed as 'Bank of New South Wales', the first sign of his new career.

Meanwhile in 1861 Joseph is pivotal in setting up the Apiarian Society. As founding president he delivers an inaugural speech so scholarly that it was published almost in full by the *Victorian Farmers Journal and Gardeners Chronicle*. He sets out a comprehensive history of the science of bee behaviour in this speech, giving an insight into the detail and care for completeness he brings to a chosen subject. He also participates in the Victorian Horticultural Society, and in the many



Top: 'Flower show at the Prahran Town Hall', wood engraving by Samuel Calvert, published in the *Illustrated Melbourne Post* of 27 March 1867. Joseph Sayce would have exhibited at flower shows like this one.

State Library of Victoria

Bottom: Newspaper clipping from *The Australasian* [Melb] 28 June 1873, documenting Sayce's contributions to the layout of Melbourne's Domain.

HORTICULTURAL.

GARDEN MEMORANDA.

THE GOVERNMENT-HOUSE DOMAIN.

With the conclusion of the financial year (on the 30th inst.) will terminate the connexion of Mr. Joseph Sayce with that part of the state property of which, about three months ago, he temporarily undertook the management, in compliance with the request of the Government. We need not recapitulate the whole of the circumstances which led to his assumption of the conduct of the work at the Government-house domain. It is enough that he was the author of a highly elaborate design, whose every detail he had thoroughly considered and most minutely worked out; that the Government required his assistance in placing his design upon the ground, and that he readily consented to give it. It is desirable that the origin of the design be here stated. The Government, it will be remembered, had offered a prize for the best plan for laying out the domain and private grounds surrounding the Vice-regal residence, and had appointed a commission to adjudge it. Out of 28 plans, three were selected as containing some useful points, and between these three the prize was ordered to be divided, but as none were wholly approved, it was resolved, if possible, to obtain others. At this juncture Mr. Joseph Sayce, of Caulfield, long and favourably known as an amateur horticulturist possessing both taste and skill in garden ornamentation, accidentally heard of the commission's great need, and tendered his services to supply it. Two designs were first prepared by Mr. Sayce, and ultimately one was adopted. We may add that no reward or emolument was asked, but that his design was generously presented by Mr. Sayce to the Government.

plant shows of the time he developed a reputation for his rhododendrons and citrus specimens. He writes a letter to the UK's *The Garden* in 1874 setting out notes of his tree growing experiences in southern Australia, referring to other articles on the subject from the same journal; again the explicit detail contained in this brief letter reinforces the sense of a very thorough mind.

Rate records show him absent from his established estate of seven-acre 'Edenthorpe' at Caulfield from 1863 until 1871, whereupon he re-emerges at Edenthorpe. For whatever reason, perhaps finally succumbing to the attractions of gold, he has moved to Walhalla. Joseph advances his banking status, becoming the manager of the Bank of Victoria at their Walhalla branch in 1868. The *Gippsland Times* reports his address as the chairman of the Perseverance Gold Mining Company at the 1868 'christening of the new engine', which included extracts of poetry by Tennyson. He held shares in at least two other mining ventures. He is appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1870, retaining this role on return to Caulfield, perhaps succumbing to the disappointments of gold.

The Government Domain design

And so, in 1872/73, to the Government Domain. The government offered a paltry prize for the best plan for laying out the domain and private gardens surrounding the vice-regal residence. Some 28 plans were received but none were ultimately considered suitable. This project was a seriously significant undertaking in scale, complexity and sensitivity, and I wonder how at that time there were 28 entities imagining they were up to the task. (Gwen Pascoe's 2012 book *Long views & short vistas* notes that designers of the large number of public botanic gardens in the second half of the 19th century could be virtually anyone connected at some level to horticulture.)

Into this vacuum Joseph Sayce, 'long and favourably known as a horticulturist possessing both taste and skill in garden ornamentation' (*Australasian* June 1873), offers two elaborate plans that meet immediate acceptance.

Anne Neale has analysed the inspiration for Sayce's second design in her piece 'Paris via Liverpool' (*Australian Garden*

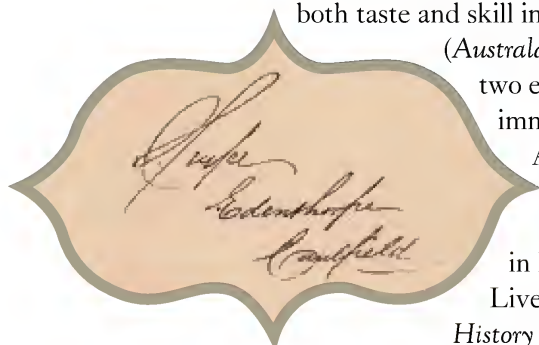
History vol 13 no 1 2001), and

acknowledges that such acceptance by the organising committee may have been supported



by prior exposure to Edward La Trobe Bateman's designs for Fitzroy and Carlton Gardens. What I find fascinating is the fact that Clement Hodgkinson, like Sayce another amateur, albeit with the power of bureaucracy behind him, was the one to firstly embrace and then publicly lay into Sayce.

Hodgkinson was a civil engineer by training with a very keen interest in trees, developed both in England and extensive travelling in Australia. It is hard to see that his 'design' for the Fitzroy Gardens is much more than a modification of Bateman's consummate original design, declaring aspects in pursuit of dust control from adjacent





Plan of the Government House and Domain Gardens designed by Joseph Sayce, Caulfield; lithographed at the Department of Lands and Survey by Samuel B Bonney, Melbourne, April 16th 1873.

State Library of Victoria

streets, and cross-connection to streets outside the gardens, rather than being based on picturesque design principles of the time. In the public spat with Sayce, Hodgkinson clumsily concedes he is prepared to break his own 'rules' in instances such as the interplanting of evergreen and deciduous trees in avenues at the Domain. Perhaps Hodgkinson was challenged by the exquisite design skills of an amateur he knew he could never match.

Sayce's treatment by Hodgkinson is reminiscent of the trials endured by Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin as they were forced to defend their designs for the national capital from the attacks of the public works bureaucrats.

In both cases, Australia seems to have originally chosen designs for their excellence, which have been subsequently regarded as grandiose and therefore impractical because of the apparent complexity of their designs.

Who is Mr Sayce? Someone who through private, comprehensive study, in this case landscape design, achieved public influence well beyond his historical profile. He deserves more.

Trevor Pitkin is a systems thinker/engineer with an enduring enthusiasm for plants of most varieties. His increasing focus on the history of gardens is starting to draw him away from new planting and into research.



John Dwyer

Willows and the Australian landscape

Willow trees on riverbank (1929–1935), by Melbourne photographer Philip E Windmiller Ettelson. State Library of Victoria

Until 30 or 40 years ago no-one would have thought of willows as weeds. Many, especially the weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*), have been much cultivated in Australian gardens and landscapes since the settlement of New South Wales. Despite a centuries-old association with humans, they have come to be called weeds by some in modern Australia.

In a despatch of 9 May 1803 to Colonial Secretary Lord Hobart, Governor King reported that ‘many Thousand Seedlings’ of willow had been planted and that it would be among the trees to be ‘generally cultivated’. Botanist Baron Ferdinand von Mueller praised many willows, noting among many virtues their ability to ‘stay bush fires’ (*Select extra-tropical plants readily eligible for Victorian industrial culture or*

naturalisation 1885, p 339). ‘Anthos’ (Harold Sargeant) wrote of willows in *Garden trees and shrubs in Australasia* (1952 p 201):

There should be a place in every large garden for a water feature of some kind, and beside a stream or pool is the natural home of the Willow. In country estates they afford generous shade for stock in summer, and planted along the banks of creeks and rivers, they are invaluable in the prevention of soil erosion.

The time-honoured handbook *Bunning’s Australian Gardener* (34th ed. 1957, p 143) described the weeping willow as ‘a lovely tree by the waterside, or for ornament and shade in large gardens’. The self-described ‘all-time best seller’ *Yates Garden Guide* said in 1981 that willows were ‘graceful trees suited to wet conditions’ (p 217). Painter Claude Monet planted willows in his garden at Giverny, and some of his most memorable paintings from there include hanging branches of willow.

Origin and history

The weeping willow has, as the common name suggests, been an emblem of bitterness and sorrow since ancient times. In naming the plant, Linnaeus seems to have accepted the longstanding belief that it was the tree by the waters of Babylon upon which the Jews hung their harps when sorrowing in captivity, as described in Psalm 137:

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth.

Babylon, on the Euphrates River about 85 kilometres south of Baghdad in Iraq, has a secure place in garden history. Although there is more than one theory on who created the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon (and on when this occurred), and although noted classical and biblical scholar Sir William Smith asserted in *A dictionary of the Bible* (1884 p 74) that 'with respect to the tree upon which the captive Israelites hung their harps, there can be no doubt that the weeping willow, *Salix babylonica* is intended', we now know that this is probably not the case.

Some 21 kinds of willow are native to the Middle Eastern region, but *S. babylonica* is of Chinese origin. Some trade with China had been established along the Silk Road, but it is unlikely that *S. babylonica* had been introduced to Babylon by the date usually ascribed to the Babylonian captivity (about 2600 years ago), and therefore it is doubtful whether *S. babylonica* was one of the plants growing 'by the waters of Babylon' at the time of the captivity of the Jewish people.

In his 1974 study of ornamental trees, Professor Hui-Lin Li suggests that the willows mentioned in the Psalms 'are now known not to be willows at all but a poplar, *Populus euphratica*' (the desert

poplar), indigenous to the region (*Shade and ornamental trees: their origins and history*, p 45). *S. babylonica* has, however, been widely cultivated and is now naturalised there in some places.

Willows (*Salix* species) and poplars (*Populus* species) are members of the Salicaceae family. Willows comprise a taxonomically complex genus of some 300 species, with hybridisation common between wild and cultivated plants. Species naturalised in Victoria include the sallow willow (*S. cinerea*), pussy willow (*Salix x reichardtii*), crack willow (*S. fragilis*), black willow (*S. nigra*), white willow (*S. alba*), white crack willow (*Salix x rubens*) and weeping willow (*S. babylonica*, although several hybrids also go under this common name). We should not overlook cricket bat willow (*S. alba* var. *caerulea*), which may not be naturalised, but is well established at Shepherd's Flat near Daylesford in Victoria.

The willow as inspiration

Why do some of us feel so keenly the removal of willows from our cultural landscapes? I think it is because willows are so deeply embedded in our culture. From the Bible onwards, our literature and music celebrate willows. The biblical story has echoes in the traditional ballad 'There is a Tavern in the Town' which includes the line *I'll hang my harp on a weeping willow-tree*. The 'Willow Song' of Desdemona in *Othello* is another good example:

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom. Her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow:
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmured her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow:
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones;-
Sing willow, willow, willow:
Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

Left: Claude Monet's garden in Giverny, France.

Alamy Stock Photo

Middle: The willows, Lake Wendouree, west side looking east, 1886, photographer unidentified.

State Library of Victoria

Right: *Salix alba*, from J Sturm (1905) *Flora von Deutschland*.



WS Gilbert took up a similar theme in the 'Willow, tit-willow' song in *The Mikado*.

Willows have also been used as medicine since ancient times in many cultures. Alison Syme gives a useful account in the introduction of her book *Willow* (Reaktion, 2014).

... and as weed

Willows are included in the Australian Weeds Committee's list of 32 weeds of national significance. In 2005 some *Salix* species were declared noxious weeds under the Victorian *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, in the 'restricted' category whereby trade in them is prohibited. Weeping willow and pussy willow have not yet been listed as weeds of national significance and are not covered by the *Catchment and Land Protection Act*, but the weeping willow is often listed as an environmental weed, in publications such as *Environmental weed invasions in Victoria* (1992).

The weeds of national significance handbook on willows published by the Australian Weeds Committee says:

Willows (*Salix* spp) are familiar icons of the Australian landscape – but are also among the most serious riparian weeds.

Willows have clearly made a major contribution to many of Australia's significant cultural landscapes. In Melbourne Merri Creek provides an example close at hand. There were many superb willows along its banks, and some are still there. But sadly, many have been removed in the name of restoring the ecology as it was before European settlement. I feel their loss deeply, and many share my view. Willows have a profound cultural resonance.

The case against willows

Willows are said to pose a threat to the environment, in that they change the ecology of creeks and rivers. Their dense shade in summer and heavy leaf fall in autumn and winter are said to suppress indigenous vegetation and river fauna (www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/Willows). It is said that if left uncontrolled willows can alter the flow and even the course of waterways. But ecologies are never static. On the contrary, they are always changing. Ecologies adapt to introduced species, and new ecologies develop in which they are incorporated. The ecologies of cultural landscapes have their own value. Cultural landscapes should not be seen as environmental degradation.

When we call willows 'weeds' we invoke powerful emotional responses of fear and dislike. My 2016 book *Weeds, plants and people* (PenFolk Publishing, Melbourne) discusses why the long and difficult association with ancient weeds such as dandelion (*Lolium temulentum*) may go some way to explain such responses. Is it right to evoke these reactions against willows? They are not a pest of agriculture. They have been widely cultivated in gardens and planted in farmland to prevent erosion and bind the banks of waterways, as well as for their aesthetic contribution to the landscape.

Willows continue to have a valuable role in gardens and cultural landscapes. They are much valued by many communities, where the nativist agenda is not always accepted. We should be careful about where and when to call them 'weeds', thereby invoking strong negative emotions about them. I think there is still a place for weeping willows in our gardens and cultural landscapes.

Dr John Dwyer is a retired QC. His publications include articles about weeds and landscape in *Australian Garden History*. His book *Weeds, plants and people* was published with assistance from the Kindred Spirits Fund. He is a former chairman of the AGHS.

Left: Lyric Theatre at Merri Creek, 2002.

Right: Walking home II, 2004. This photograph shows a site of willow removal on Merri Creek in 2004. photos Siri Hayes





Matthew Higgins

Stately spires: the capital's arboreta

Canberrans and visitors to the national capital could be forgiven for thinking the new National Arboretum is the only such enterprise ever established in the ACT. Decades before the National, there were other arboreta. While the new one has a high public profile, these others had a high-altitude profile.

During the 40 years from 1928 to 1968, over 30 mountain arboreta were planted, mostly on the Australian Capital Territory's highest mountain range, the Brindabellas, to answer an Australian timber quandary. With plenty of native hardwoods, but only a handful of native softwoods, how could we develop a softwood industry so necessary for construction purposes? In answering that question the arboreta went beyond their immediate objective and left a legacy of significant tree species from around the world,

their coniferous spires becoming for many a place of beauty and edification.

Today of course the vast swathes given over to plantations of Monterey pine or 'radiata' (*Pinus radiata*) in southeastern Australia show where our softwoods mainly come from. But radiata's success wasn't assured in the early years, and if disease struck it then other species needed to be in reserve. To make an informed decision about what to plant, ACT foresters set up the arboreta as research plots.

Purposes of the arboreta

Aiming to identify the best species, varieties and strains of exotic trees for commercial plantation use, the arboreta eventually contained 63 *Pinus* species, 53 other conifers and 32 hardwoods. To fully test the trees, the arboreta were planted on sites of widely varying aspect and elevation. Each arboretum contained a number of plots, each plot about 20 metres square and devoted to a particular species.

Strongly vertical, deep-shaded views typified the arboreta.
photo Matthew Higgins

The task was led by the Commonwealth Government's Forestry and Timber Bureau — of which the Australian Forestry School (AFS) in Canberra was a branch — and assisted by the Department of Interior's Forestry Section. English-born and Irish-educated Charles Edward Lane-Poole, Australia's Inspector-General of Forests and Acting Principal of the AFS, founded the project. Described by biographer LT Carron as 'one of the great pioneers of forestry in Australia', Lane-Poole expeditiously began work on the arboreta in the high country. The ACT mountains were mostly government-controlled land, were close-by, and well-watered.

Their beginnings

An initial trial was planted at Laurel Camp in 1928. The first major arboretum was Blundells Farm, begun in 1929. Following were Reids Pinch North, Reids Pinch South, and Piccadilly Circus, all 1932. AFS students assisted planting. One was David Shoobridge (who later headed Canberra's Parks and Gardens Section). David recalled for me how he helped to plant at Piccadilly North American mountain species like *Pinus ponderosa* (western yellow pine). This arboretum also included *P. radiata*, *P. contorta*, *P. torreyana* and *P. pinaster*, redwood *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, Douglas fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii* and various deciduous trees. 'It was one of the coldest camps I've ever been at', David said during our 1994 interview. Milk jugs froze in the mess tent.

The arboreta became important study sites for AFS students who, at a single location, learned to identify trees from around the world. Botany lecturer Charlie Hamilton told me, 'There's no doubt that all students gleaned a lot of valuable information and experience from the plantings that had been done. It's a wonderful thing that those arboreta were there.' Student visits continued even after the AFS moved to the Australian National University in 1964.

CE Lane-Poole, second from left, outside the Australian Forestry School in the 1930s. Note the hook on his left arm, a legacy of a shooting accident in his youth.

photo source
Charlotte 'Charles'
Burstin, nee Lane-Poole



In the 1940s better road access saw three new arboreta planted further south on the range. Bendora, Snow Gum and Stockyard Creek were established on sites chosen not by Lane-Poole, but by forester Lindsay Pryor (later Shoobridge's predecessor as head of Parks and Gardens in Canberra). These were higher in elevation, and offered contrast in aspect: whereas Bendora and Stockyard Creek faced the cool/moist southeast, Snow Gum faced the hotter/drier west. Various white pines were added to the species mix here.

Reflecting the arboretas' remote mountain locations, shelter huts were sometimes built. Bendora Hut was assembled from old roadmen's huts, while at Stockyard Creek alpine ash (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*) felled to make way for the arboretum was split into slabs for a hut. Both huts (a vestigial ruin in the case of the latter) can be found today.

During the 1940s–60s further arboreta were planted at Blue Range and other spots in Uriarra Forest. The highest arboretum in the entire collection was planted on 1762 m Mt Ginini in 1959, and another at southern Gudgenby in 1966. A few were planted away from the mountains, at Kowen to Canberra's northeast, and Green Hills.

How the arboreta were planted

Planting was done in winter and the seedlings were raised in the Forestry Bureau nursery at Yarralumla. Trees were planted 'open-rooted' (without soil attached). Each species plot usually had nine rows of nine trees, ie a total of 81 trees.

As the trees developed, they were measured to determine growth rates. Diameter at breast height and height to the terminal bud were the two main measurements. Over time, *radiata*'s supremacy became evident in the data, though (not surprisingly given its coastal origins) the species was vulnerable to snow damage at higher elevations.

The people

For many years, leader of the works gang which measured, pruned and otherwise tended the plots was Scotsman Andy Wood. Later, fellow Scot Gib Hogg led the gang, which by then included Italians like Bruno Monteleone and Dominic Pelle. Occasionally language problems — with a Scot instructing Italians — resulted in some rather weird pruning! Rangers — invariably local mountain bushmen — from the Bulls Head settlement on the Brindabella Range helped with work too.

AFS graduate Jack Fielding was the Forestry Bureau's research officer 1945–1968 and he energetically pushed ahead with the arboreta



program. He tested new species and organised the rather disorderly data. In 1960 this data was helpful when Alan Brown compiled arboreta maps with detailed plot information, maps which remain highly useful to this day.

It was Fielding who established Ginini (and rather over-zealously scattered highly invasive *P. contorta* randomly across the peak). A friend of Snowy Scheme botanist Jurgen Raeder Roitzsch, Fielding got high-altitude species seed for Ginini use. More significantly, Fielding was a tree-breeder who recognised the importance of provenance — the place of origin of the seed — in tree performance. This had largely been overlooked earlier. He trialled various pines at Blundells in the 1950s, where Corsican *P. nigra* fared better than Austrian provenances.

Alan Brown (later chief of the CSIRO Division of Forest Research) worked with Fielding, trialling drought-tolerant pines such as *P. attenuata*. Max Jacobs (Lane-Poole's successor as head of the AFS) and Fielding tested the multiple natural locations of radiata and some of this work was a world first. In 1978 Ken Eldridge, by then leading the arboreta scientific work, executed the first systematic and definitive seed collection trip of radiata, bringing back 70 kg of seed from the North American mainland and island sites. Fielding, Jacobs and Brown all contributed to progeny and clonal trials, some of which was world-leading.

The arboreta results, including the way in which radiata outperformed other species, were published in papers and at conference presentations. The first of

the latter was at the Institute of Foresters of Australia Canberra meeting in 1953. Further data was aired at the 1957 British Commonwealth Forestry Conference. By the 1990s, data from the arboreta was being used in United Nations publications.

Information gained from the arboreta also had some value for landscape plantings in Canberra parks and streets, though it was fairly minor.

Changing attitudes to the plantings

Attitudes changed over time and while some foresters like Jack Fielding wanted to see the Brindabellas' native forests replaced by pines, some thought otherwise. Gradually an awareness of the ecological and aesthetic values of Australian native bushland permeated the community. A move for a national park (eventually Namadgi) was under way. With the arboreta measurement program completed in the 1970s, the plots assumed a lower priority for CSIRO which by then was in charge. The arboreta at Ginini and later Stockyard Creek were removed because of concerns about wilding infestation of native forest. Two noble firs (*Abies procera*) were retained at Stockyard and remain today as exotic monuments in an otherwise mountain native forest.

The later story

Some arboreta were abandoned, but there was increasing recognition of the educational and recreational values of the remaining arboreta for the public, and five key arboreta were actively maintained. Species labels were placed on plots, information leaflets were printed, and walking trails with interpretive text were installed at Blundells Farm, which had become the most significant arboretum in the collection. I often visited Blundells during the 1980s–90s, incorporating it into bushwalks for community groups, and in 2000 I made a short ABC television item there.

By the beginning of the present century, 20 arboreta survived. Visitors could experience the conical shapes, dark hues, deep shade and wind-driven acoustic qualities of these trees from around the world. They were the best and biggest collection of conifers in the nation, with some being the oldest in Australia. Then came the 2003 bushfires. All but one arboretum — Bendora — were destroyed in what was a tragic loss of cultural heritage in the high country. Yet we are fortunate to still have Bendora, which has taken over Blundells' interpretive role with tracks, signage and the shelter hut making it a very special place to visit in Canberra's mountain hinterland.

Matthew Higgins is a Canberra historian and writer.

Top: Author sketch of the shelter hut at Bendora Arboretum, ca 1990s.

Bottom: One of the embossed aluminium signs made by Bill Madden, and installed in the 1970s to inform arboretum visitors. *Pinus ponderosa* is the most widely distributed pine in America.

Matthew Higgins



Max Nankervis

Remembering a Preston garden

The Wilkinson house and garden in Cramer St, Preston, at the time of the author's association with it.
photo Max Nankervis
ca 1960

'Student looking for work. Any jobs – gardening, window cleaning, etc'. It must have been about 1958 when I placed the ad in the local paper. And to my surprise a response phone call from a lady soon came in. 'How much an hour are you asking?', enquired Miss (Kathleen May) Wilkinson. Such were my entrepreneurial and business skills I hadn't even thought of that aspect. But I replied, 'One and six'. Yes, pre-decimal currency. 'Oh, that sounds reasonable', she said. And so I was engaged.

The next Saturday morning I arrived on my bike at her house in Cramer Street in the Melbourne suburb of Preston, ready for work – whatever it was. The work, it transpired, was to do odd gardening jobs. There was, I later learned, a gardener, 'Campbell', who never did get a

personal name. It was always just 'Campbell'. And we never did meet. I soon gathered the impression that Campbell was getting on in years, and was less able to do some of the heavier jobs. The brawn – but not the brains – of a 14 year old was needed to augment his failing strength. And so began my lifelong interest – and by default, education – in gardens and gardening.

The house was built around 1911 as a retirement home for Miss Wilkinson's father, William Cleland Wilkinson, a (or *the*) local doctor.¹ Unfortunately, he died in 1915, so he only enjoyed the house and garden for about five years. As I experienced it the garden covered an area about 100 feet by 200 feet, though a 1931 aerial photo by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) indicates it was part of an area about four times larger. In the early days the rest of the property was probably for the horses. I'm pretty sure there never was a car in the household.

A home in its European setting

Over the next few years I came to love that garden, and my 'hours' grew (as did my remuneration – I didn't even have to ask). I worked on any day of my convenience, except the day Campbell was there! While I was always given 'morning tea', my increased hours morphed into a sit-down lunch in the dining room with Miss Wilkinson and the housekeeper. We sat in the bay-windowed dining room which looked out onto the 'shrubbery' section of the garden, overlooked by 'Fireside Fairies', a large painting of Miss Wilkinson and her sister Louisa as young girls, executed by a fashionable portrait painter of the turn of the century, Tudor St George Tucker. Dr Wilkinson was Tudor's physician and, I suspect, intellectual soulmate.

Perhaps what I remember most, and what influenced me in garden design was the garden layout which, although on a reasonably small scale, had all the elements of a Victorian or Edwardian garden – sinuous paths, vistas through dense planting, and defined sections. So, of course, it was a garden of European plantings and English style, with little condescension to Australian flora or climatic considerations. Water conservation in those days was hardly an issue.

The rear section of the house was the working area, but the best room was the library. Miss Wilkinson's father, whose earlier days had been spent at sea as a ship's doctor, was a bibliophile. His collection of books was housed in a large outhouse which had also served as a billiard room. Another of my jobs was to annually dust those thousands of books. I was not only gardener, but jack of all trades. Over the years I was given various volumes including a 1694 volume entitled *The young lawyers recreation*, and a set of the 1886 *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*, which, I was told, had been given to her father as payment for medical services.

The house had been built in about 1911 after her father's retirement as district medical officer. While I am not certain, I came to understand that the original garden design was the product of both Miss Wilkinson and her mother Louisa Ann who died in 1936, though the maintenance was largely Miss Wilkinson's. But clearly Miss Wilkinson's gardening interests were long-standing as she is reported in the *Preston Leader* newspaper in May 1917 as being part of the organisation of the annual garden show of the local Anglican church, All Saints.



Top: Looking from the front verandah with the liquidambar dominating the front lawn area.

photo Max Nankervis
ca 1960

Middle: The side garden, showing the dining room bay window looking out onto the shrubbery garden.

photo Max Nankervis
ca 1960

Bottom: Tudor St George Tucker 'Fireside Fairies', 1897, a portrait of Miss [Kathleen] May Wilkinson and her sister Louisa (aged about 9 years). The portrait hung in the dining room at Cramer St.



Above: MMBW plan for Cramer Street Preston, showing the Wilkinson block (highlighted).

State Library of Victoria

Top right: 1931 aerial view showing the original area of Cramer St in the middle of this photograph. The dark line enclosing the property shows that the whole site appears to have been enclosed by the peppercorn tree (*Schinus molle*) hedge.

The reduced site as the author knew it is the northeast (upper left) quarter of the block.

MMBW (now Melbourne Water) aerial photograph, in author's collection



Right: The prized pineapple lilies.

photo Max Nankervis
ca 1960

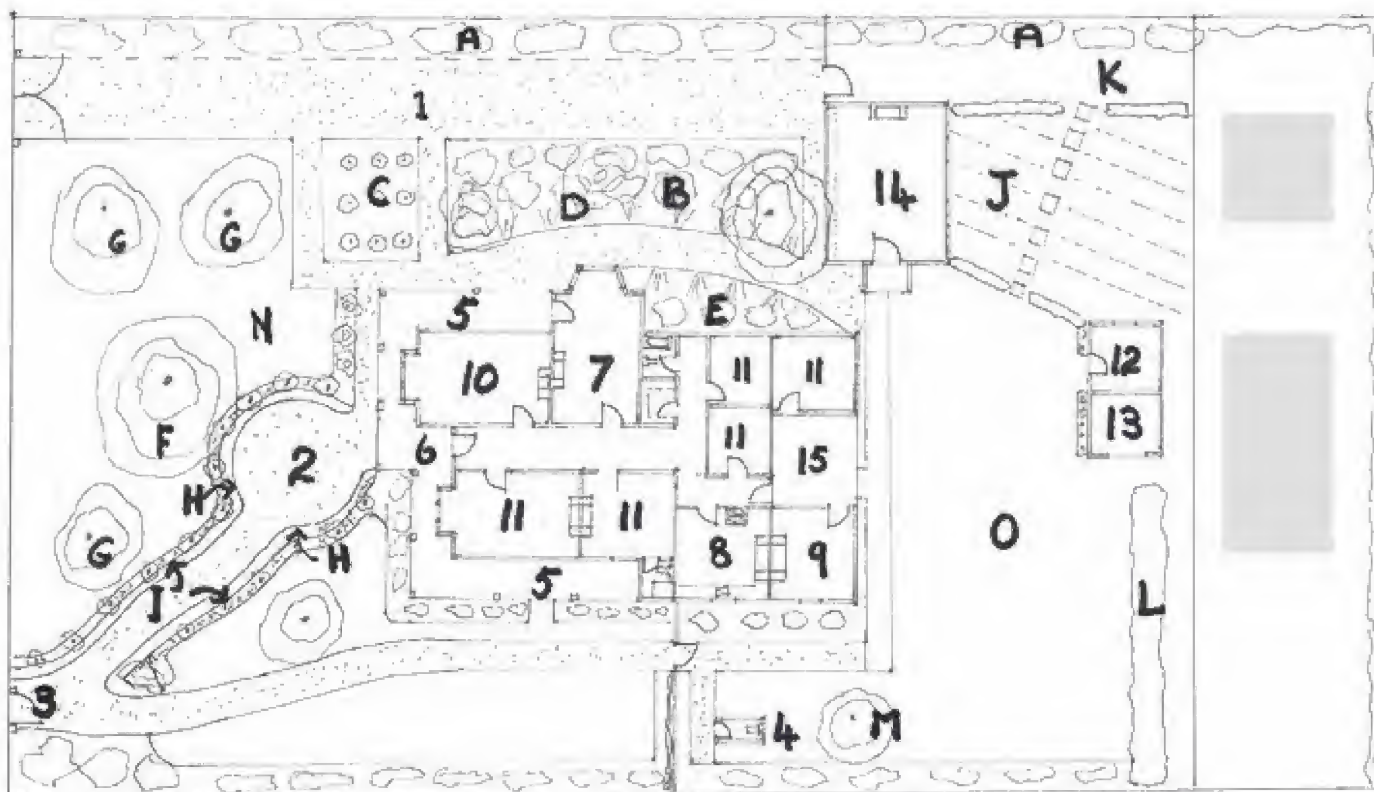
The garden layout

The plan shows the elements of the garden. Essentially it was in three, perhaps four sections — the entrance path to the front door and associated plantings, specialist plots such as a rose garden and a shrubbery, a rear garden area, and a vegetable plot which sat behind a privet edge.

The most attractive element in the garden was the gently curving pedestrian path from the front gate to a small, round 'turntable' just off the front verandah. This path was edged with a narrow (about 0.6 m wide) sloping lawn and narrow garden bed annually planted with ranunculus or petunias, set between standard roses. So there was always a spray of colour for any visitors on arrival. Like most paths, it was laid in cream gravel and one of my tasks over the years was to weed these paths, as Miss Wilkinson refused to use any noxious pesticides. Perhaps she was ahead of her time in this.

At a junction in this path was another which curved towards the house and side verandah past a lawn leading through a trellis gate to the rear garden, a utilitarian area. Just past the gate was an outdoor toilet, perhaps the original privy, behind which was the lemon tree — of particular pride to Miss Wilkinson. One of my jobs was to ensure no weeds ever competed for growth, and occasionally cut out deadwood.

On the eastern side of the garden was a gravel drive, bordered, as I recall, by trimmed



peppercorn trees. Another weeding task, though no car ever used it – except mine as I grew older and traded-in my bicycle for a Volkswagen.

The front lawn between the picket fence and the house was planted with specimen trees, especially those of the fashion of the period. In particular, I recall, the protruding roots of a very dominant liquidambar were making inroads into the buffalo grass lawn.

Between this lawn and the shrubbery, which dominated the outlook from the dining room, was a rose garden, planted with various specimens which I kept weed-free and mulched each year. The shrubbery consisted of typical plantings of camellias, rhododendrons, lilies and irises, and stretched all the way to the library outhouse, with hydrangeas on the other side of the gravel path, along the wall of the house, relatively shaded in summer by the house.

Beyond the library building was the vegetable garden which by my time had been allowed to fall into disuse, although the occasional brave vegetable survived. Again, my job there was to keep the weeds down. Beyond that, against the side boundary was a sort of compost area.

Along the rear fence was a tall variegated pittosporum hedge which had once been merely a sight screen blocking out the view of the horse paddock, and a shed, divided into two sections. One section was a tool shed where all garden tools were kept, including things like scythes. Yes, there was even a scythe. The other, more open section,

acted as a woodshed; alongside the wood was a large hessian bag of coal. Prompted by a project on the Great Depression of the 1930s set for me in Australian History by Professor Ian Turner, Miss Wilkinson told me the story of that bag. It seems that during the depression a man came to the door lugging the bag of coal, offering to sell it by the bucket load. But Miss Wilkinson took pity on the man carrying such a heavy load – and bought the whole bag! And there it was, still half-full some 30 years later.

Unfortunately most of my work was done in the days of Box Brownie photography, though I did acquire a coloured slide camera in my university days. So I have little photographic evidence of the garden which was so instrumental in my garden education, although Miss Wilkinson did once commission me to photograph her prized pineapple plant (*Eucomis*) in a year in which it must have been particularly prolific.

Sadly all traces of the house and garden are now gone. The government bought the site to extend a school. Adorning the replacement buildings, typical of 1970–80s plantings, are some Australian native eucalypts.

1 See Darebin Heritage database
<http://heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au/article/628>

Retired town planner and lecturer **Max Nankervis** has an interest in heritage conservation and local history. He is currently president of the Middle Park History Group in Melbourne.

Above: Annotated plan drawn from memory by the author, of the Wilkinson garden and house.

A Peppercorn tree hedge, B shrubbery, C rose garden, D lilies/iris, E hydrangeas, F liquidambar, G specimen trees, H standard roses, I annuals (petunias/cinerarias), J vegetable garden, K compost area, L variegated pittosporum hedge, M lemon tree, N buffalo grass lawn, O back lawn.

1 Gravel drive, 2 circular entrance area, 3 front entrance gate, 4 outside toilet, 5 verandah, 6 front door, 7 dining room, 8 kitchen, 9 laundry/scullery, 10 sitting room, 11 bedroom, 12 garden tool shed, 13 wood shed, 14 library.



Benjamin Wilkie

Scotland and Australian botany in the colonial era

Johnston family member; Scotland (?1900), photographer unknown. Landscapes such as this would have been familiar to many 19th century Scottish migrants to Australia.
State Library of Victoria

Sydney Parkinson was born in 1745 in Edinburgh, and from an early age showed a keen interest and talent in botanical drawing. In his early twenties, Parkinson was employed by Joseph Banks as a botanical draughtsman, and soon found himself aboard the *Endeavour* on James Cook's voyage to the South Seas in 1768. During the voyage, Parkinson made a significant number drawings and sketches of flora, fauna, people, and landscapes. He is a likely contender to be the first Scot to set foot on Australian soil, and is almost certainly the first European artist to have done so.

Parkinson made attempts to compile the vocabularies of the people Cook's party met on the shorelines of Tahiti and New Holland. He was one of the first to depict the Australian landscape,

environment, and people from direct observation. The *Endeavour* voyage would yield 30,000 plant specimens of 3600 species, 1400 of which were new to science. The scale of Parkinson's job was immense, and he completed over 600 outline drawings on the voyage and 269 finished paintings. The rate at which new species were discovered on the voyage meant that, much of the time, Parkinson could only partially complete illustrations.

When the *Endeavour* was returning home from its first expedition, it anchored at Batavia (present-day Jakarta) for repairs. Here, numerous crew members contracted dysentery, including Parkinson. He died at sea on 26 January 1771.

The legacy of this young Scottish botanical artist is immense — 21 volumes of his plant drawings are held at the British Museum, and many of these are of Australian plants. Some were published posthumously, but often without

credit, in the first published accounts of the voyage. Indeed, Parkinson's work only received widespread recognition with the British Museum's publication of the *Banks Florilegium* in the 1980s and 1990s, the lavish plates of which were based upon Parkinson's illustrations and sketches.

Parkinson's work remains of utmost scientific importance, but he would not be the last Scot to make a mark in the world of Australian botany in the decades that followed Cook's expedition to the Antipodes.

Scotland and the environmental professions

Scots made distinct contributions to the environmental professions across the Empire, in fields including plant collecting, botany, geology and exploration. The reasons for Scots' infiltration of these profession are numerous. From at least the 17th century, medical training in Scotland, reflecting traditions in continental Europe, was connected with botanical interests and emphasised the relationships between health and the environment. An understanding of the botanical world was essential to medical training, and most Scottish doctors were well trained in the dissection, analysis and identification of plants. Many public health problems were connected with environmental solutions.

Since Scotland overproduced medical professionals, it is not surprising that many of them expanded their environmental interests during their tenure abroad in the colonies of the British Empire. Scottish missionaries were also often trained as doctors, and their combination of medical, theological, and environmental education permeated their practices and writings on overseas missions.

Further to this, from the 17th century onwards Scots became associated with gardens and gardening. Some have suggested that this is because Scotland's natural environment is so harsh, and therefore more effort was put into gardening practices. What is clear, however, is that the gardens, which serviced the medical profession's interest in plants and the environment, were integral to the development of Scots as leaders in the creation of botanical gardens at home and abroad. Scots were the key figures at Kew Gardens and the Chelsea Physic Garden in London, and founded and maintained botanical gardens across the diverse lands of the British Empire.

Joseph Banks frequently chose Scots to collect plants for his botanical pursuits — Francis Masson was sent to the Cape, for example, and botanist Robert Brown was attached to Matthew

Flinders' Australian expeditions in 1802–5 — and subsequently to manage the British botanical gardens in which they were cultivated for study.

Wealthy landowners were deeply involved in landscape and garden design as a matter of aesthetics and social standing, but were also key figures in the development of forestry. Various industries had contributed to the almost-total deforestation of Scotland by the 1600s, and landowners concerned about the effect of this on a range of timber-related industries helped to make forestry a Scottish speciality. They also saw tree planting as a potential business opportunity.

In the 1700s, some of the largest estates in Scotland became involved in tree planting, which was understood to add value to land that was otherwise unproductive. This was not limited to native Scottish species, especially after the expansion of the British Empire. Taking advantage of high timber prices, particularly during the Napoleonic wars, the Dukes of Atholl planted millions of non-native conifers on their Highland estate in Perthshire during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The knowledge of environmental conditions required of forestry meant that Scotland became known as a hotspot for advanced agronomy, in which even farm servants were skilled and literate, a circumstance not generally mirrored in England at the time.

The Scottish Enlightenment thinkers also had a great deal of interest in the environment and climate and their relationship to the development of different human civilisations across the world. When doctors, botanists, geologists and other professionals went abroad, many took with them the idea that the civilisations and cultures they encountered were products of biology and the environment. This is not to mention the prominent Scottish flavour of both hunting and wildlife conservation abroad, including the likes of John Muir.

Broadly speaking, Scottish professionals had a great deal of environmental interest and awareness, and exercised a remarkable influence at home and across the worlds of the British Empire. Australia was no exception.

Scots and Australian botany

In a letter to his aunt in Dumfries during 1791, Scottish convict artist Thomas Watling remarked:

The whole appearance of nature must be striking in the extreme to the adventurer, and at first this will seem to him to be a country of enchantments. The generality of the birds and the beasts sleeping by day, and singing or catering in the night, is such an inversion in nature as is hitherto unknown.



Left: Scottish botanical artist Sydney Parkinson, self-portrait (detail).
Wikimedia Commons, source Natural History Museum



Middle: James Drummond with one of his grandchildren. Photographer thought to be Ewen MacKenzie, ca 1860.

Wikimedia Commons, source Rica Erickson (1969) *The Drummonds of Hawthornden*

Right: Walter Hill, first superintendent of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, ca 1880.

State Library of Queensland

Watling's illustrations provide fascinating insight into the environment of British settlers.

Scots were important in the establishment of botanic gardens in Australia, as they were in other parts of the Empire. Charles Fraser (or Frazer, 1788–1831) from Perthshire was appointed the first superintendent of Sydney's early botanic gardens in 1816, and would later distinguish himself as a field botanist on numerous expeditions around Australia. Other early Scottish superintendents of the Sydney gardens were brothers Richard (d 1835) and Allan (1791–1839) Cunningham, and the ex-convict James Kidd (1801–67) of Fife, who is believed to have made some of the earliest olive oil in NSW.

Yet another Scot, Dundee-born Charles Moore (1820–1905), became superintendent at Sydney and stayed in the position from 1848 to 1896. Moore rejuvenated the gardens, and implemented the still-familiar labelling system 'showing the Natural Order, Scientific Name and Authority, English name and Native Country of each Plant', as the *Australian dictionary of biography* notes. He also collected for the gardens, gathering specimens from as far afield as the New Hebrides, Solomon Islands, and New Caledonia, and established a medicinal plant garden, herbarium and library.

An unlikely Scottish contributor to South Australian botany was John M Black (1855–1951), at times a journalist, banker, opera manager, and farmer. He arrived in Australia in 1877 and soon became fascinated by the colony's flora. A gifted amateur, Black eventually published the celebrated *Flora of South Australia* in four parts during the 1920s, and later bequeathed his private herbarium to the University of Adelaide.

In Western Australia, an influential figure was James Drummond (ca 1787–1863), who had been curator of the Cork Botanical Gardens.

Drummond arrived from Scotland as the government naturalist in 1829. He became an avid plant collector. 'When his knapsack and pockets were filled with plants', wrote Rica Erickson, 'his white head was bared and his hat was crammed to the brim'. The thousands of specimens Drummond collected were eventually placed in 25 herbariums across the world, and more than one hundred Western Australian plants have been named after him.

The mark of Scots can also be found in Queensland – in Brisbane, a cairn was erected to honour Edinburgh-born Walter Hill (1819–1904), a distinguished botanist who was the first to granulate Queensland sugar cane in 1863. Hill worked in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and at Kew Gardens before arriving in Sydney in 1852.

He was first superintendent of Brisbane's botanic gardens in 1855, and is credited with introducing mango, pawpaw, ginger, poinciana and jacaranda to the colony [ed. note: see Glenn Cooke's article in this issue], along with mahogany and tamarind trees. Hill was also a keen advocate of Queensland's flora and fauna, arranging for their exhibition around the world.

Back in Scotland, in the 1840s Elgin-born gardener John Dallachy (1808?–71) attempted to raise Australian plants from seed for the Earl of Aberdeen. Dallachy was later appointed overseer and curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in 1849. His main interest was in collecting plant specimens for the gardens, rather than the development of their landscape. He made numerous expeditions around Victoria. Botanist Joseph Maiden described Dallachy in 1908 in *Records of Victorian botanists* as perhaps the best Australian botanical collector 'to whom justice has not been done'.

Conclusion

From the early encounters of Sydney Parkinson to the consolidation and growth of some of Australia's finest botanical gardens, Scots were prominent in the world of early Australian botany. The list above is brief, but helps to illustrate how their interest in Australia's natural world can be understood in the context of Scotland's wider contributions to the environmental professions across the colonies of the British Empire.

Dr Benjamin Wilkie is a social and environmental historian at Deakin University in Warrnambool, Victoria. Ben has a long-held interest in the connected histories of Scotland, Australia, and the British Empire. His forthcoming book *The Scots in Australia, 1788–1938* will be published by Boydell & Brewer in November 2017.

For the bookshelf

Louise Wilson (2016) *Margaret Flockton: a fragrant memory*

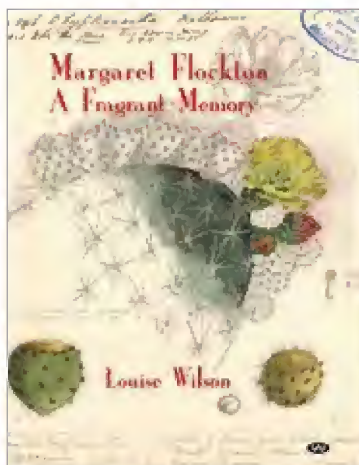
Wakefield Press, Mile End SA 5031, xiii+305 pp, hardback, \$49.95

As much a family history as a biography of the talented artist, illustrator and lithographer Margaret Flockton (1861–1953), this extensively researched work creates a portrait of a diligent, reserved woman. Louise Wilson has garnered some understanding of her nature and ambitions through diverse records, letters and the family's oral history contributions.

Flockton worked as a freelance artist and lithographer and was appointed in 1901, initially on a temporary basis until a permanent appointment in 1909, as Australia's first fully-employed botanical illustrator at the Royal Botanic Gardens' Herbarium by director JH Maiden. For 26 years she executed hundreds of illustrations, lithographic plates and coloured sketches. As well as being a superb illustrator, her skill as a lithographer was astonishing. Those familiar with her plates in *Maiden's Forest flora of New South Wales* and *A critical revision of the genus Eucalyptus* would be aware of this.



It is a pleasure to see many of her earlier wildflower paintings, chromolithographic prints and postcards reproduced in this book. Perhaps it would have been preferable in this artist's biography to reproduce at least some details of these fine works at their true size, as well as more of the illustrated plates from Maiden's publications (even at reduced size), to give a better indication of the quality of these rarely seen works. It is disappointing that all illustrations



are framed with thick pink borders, rather than using the available space for images.

The cover illustration gives a better indication of the detail and quality of her work and it would have been wonderful to have more of this design approach carried through the book.

This detailed biography of Flockton's life and legacy builds on the recognition for Flockton's work that Catherine Wardrop and Lesley Elkan, illustrators at the Royal Botanic Garden & Domain Trust, have been championing since 2004 through the internationally respected annual Margaret Flockton Award for Scientific Illustration.

Beverly Allen is a botanical artist based in Sydney.

Nicholas Money (2017) *Mushrooms – a natural and cultural history*

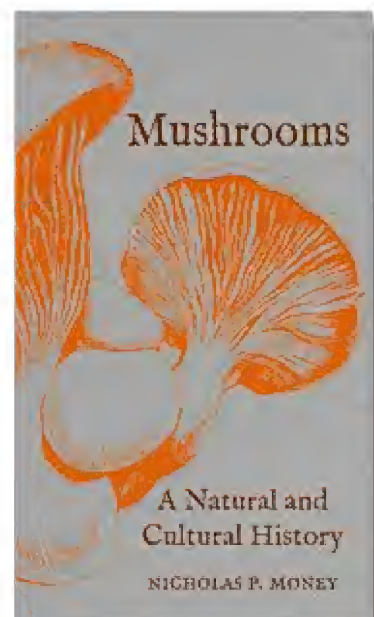
Reaktion Books, London, hardback, 199 pp, RRP \$49.95

Mycologist Nicholas Money sticks up for lifeforms that most people overlook, or worse, attempt to obliterate. *Mushrooms* is the latest offering by Money, whose previous books celebrate fungi as well as other unregarded organisms.

With his characteristically smart and sassy wit, Money guides us through the science of fungi but also tackles cultural themes less often explored by mycologists, including the contentious terrains of psychedelic fungi, their simmering histories of superstition, and the dubious undercurrents of the medicinal mushroom industry. Money delights in debunking fungal myths and misunderstandings, reminding us that 'mushrooms are far stranger and much more interesting than anything imagined in mycological folklore'.

Informative, entertaining and at times provocative, *Mushrooms* combines science, cultural histories and personal anecdotes in an inviting introduction for the novice venturing into fungal realms.

Dr Alison Pouliot is an ecologist and environmental photographer, whose recent PhD is on human perceptions of fungi.



Diary dates

For further details on events, please see the AGHS website or contact the relevant branch.

Victoria

Friday 27 to Monday 30 October 2017

AGHS National Conference
'Marvellous Melbourne' (see below)

AGHS national conferences

2017

Friday 27 – Sunday 29 October 2017

**Marvellous Melbourne:
the challenge of change**

AGHS 2017 annual conference, State
Library of Victoria, Melbourne

23–25 October 2017

**AGHS pre-conference tour
of homestead gardens of the
Western District**

Fully booked at time of printing.

Tuesday 31 October –14 November 2017

**Post-conference New Zealand South
Island tour**

Join Lynne Walker on a personal tour to
New Zealand to visit her favourite gardens.

2018

Friday 26 – Monday 29 October 2018

**Gardens in times of peace and
conflict**

AGHS annual conference, Mittagong,
Southern Highlands of NSW.

Tasmania

*Flyers with all details will be sent one month
before these events.*

Saturday 4 November 2017

**Garden visit and lunch at
'High Peak', Neika, Hobart**

Sunday 3 December 2017

**Christmas lunch at 'Prospect House',
Hamilton**

Sydney and Northern New South Wales

Sunday 3 December 2017

Branch Christmas party

4 pm, Garden of David and Angela Low,
Warawee

Southern Highlands NSW

Sunday 8 October 2017

**Light lunch at The Loch, Berrima,
visit to Upper Woodlands**

Owner Charles Moore will talk about his
ideas, designs and future plans for Upper
Woodlands, High Range.

Saturday 11 November 2017

Bundanoon Gardens bus trip

Includes lunch in and afternoon tea in
two gardens.

Friday 1 December 2017

Branch Christmas party

South Australia

Sunday 10 December 2017

**Christmas Cheer in a delightful
Adelaide Hills garden**

3–5 pm, 10 Snows Rd, Aldgate. Bring a
plate of finger food to share; tea, coffee,
wine and soft drinks provided. Contact
Andrew Plumer 0401 124 004.

Sunday 10 September 2017

**Day bus trip to Coonalpyn – dry
land gardening, local art projects,
regional history**

9 am Depart Adelaide, hearing about
settlement and farming as we pass
through rural towns. Country style
catered lunch and tour of 'Rural
Renewal Through the Arts' project incl
magnificent Silos Mural, completed 2017.
Bookings via Trybooking.

Western Australia

Sunday 8 October 2017

Visit to the Serpentine district

Visit two historic properties south of Perth,
BYO picnic lunch.

Sunday 19 November 2017

Woodbridge House, Midland

2 pm Joint function with Friends of
Woodbridge; John Viska talk 'Horticultural
propagation and fruit storage techniques
of the Harper Nursery era'. Tickets \$10
includes pm tea and access to the house,
built by farmer, politician, newspaper
proprietor and nurseryman Charles Harper
(1842–1912). Numbers limited, RSVP to
Sue Monger 0417 187 376,
susanmonger@yahoo.com.au.

Sunday 3 December 2017

WA branch Christmas function

2 pm McDougall House and Park,
Como. The McDougall family operated
a dairy with a herd of 80 cows until
1946, one of the last suburban dairies
in Perth. The house is now the home
of South Perth Society of Arts and
Crafts. RSVP Sue Monger 0417 187 376
susanmonger@yahoo.com.au.

ACT Monaro Riverina

Friday 20 October 2017

**'Discovering Ferdinand Bauer',
speaker David Stuart**

12.30–1.30 pm, Conference Room,
National Library of Australia, Parkes
Place, ACT, in association with Friends of
NLA. \$10 AGHS members and Friends
of NLA, \$15 non-members, book
through the National Library at
<http://tix.yt/bauer>. Note NO bookings to
be made through AGHS.

Friday 17 November 2017

**Visit to Gundaroo (Bowylie,
Blake garden, Vogelweide)**

Thursday 23 November 2017

**Branch Christmas event,
Woden homestead 4:30 pm**

Recommended reading

Readers might like to know of an excellent article on Olive Pink by Saskia Beudel and Margo Daly, now freely available online at www.publish.csiro.au/hr/pdf/HR14016. The article appeared in 2014 in *Historical Records of Australian Science* (25: 227–52). As the authors write, 'Pink conceived of a garden with a unique and pioneering set of aims in comparison to other public gardens in Australia during the period. She developed, too, a set of horticultural practices adapted to the ecological conditions of the Alice Springs setting that were ahead of their time. It is likely these practices were informed at least to some degree by Indigenous knowledge of flora and other matters. Pink was neither a trained botanist nor horticulturalist.'

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Marginal landscapes



Left: Children playing in wasteland.

Middle: Ferns emerging in a mineral-rich nook.

Right: Mining landscape.

photos Helen Armstrong

Helen Armstrong's book *Marginal landscapes* was published in 2016. Here, she discusses her motivation in writing about landscapes seldom noted.

This book provides a different way of seeing landscapes. It is easy to love picturesque landscapes but in this book, I reveal why we should also care about — maybe not love, but recognise — the deep meaning and possible beauty in untidy places. Australian cities are made up of complex landscapes that embrace the drama of the new, respect for urban bushland and disquiet about marginal lands, especially abandoned industrial sites. In this book, I seek to arouse interest in these messy places by revealing the layered richness of urban space so that it is not subsumed by stereotyped urban redevelopments.

The book is divided into four parts, *Remembering*, *Forgetting*, *Accepting* and *Re-Enchanting*. The first part explores the marginal landscapes of our childhood as places where children develop independence through adventures away from adult surveillance. The second part, *Forgetting*, explores why we unthinkingly allow messy sites to be redeveloped. I suggest that this is linked to spectacle cities and how they facilitate a 'culture of forgetting'. In exploring this urban amnesia, I wonder if it is linked to a fear of remembering; where we need to remove traces of any failed enterprises. Such places can convey a sense of dread, a feeling of lurking unease that maybe history will repeat itself. Instead I suggest these uncanny shadow-lands can bring about resilience in the urban dweller, possibly as sites for 'deep dwelling'.

This leads into part three, *Accepting*, which looks at the positive attributes of marginal lands, such as the beauty in dereliction. I look at how marginal landscapes in post-Soviet Europe and Detroit have

become places of optimistic urban change in unusual and creative ways. There is also a new ecological awareness about wastelands, often revealed by artist-led projects.

Abandoned sites have become the focus of the new activist culture of 'walking the city'; including two Sydney projects, one in the inner city called 'Stalking Sydney' and one in western Sydney called 'Journey down the highway'. Part four, *Re-Enchanting*, describes how marginal waterfronts can become re-enchanted through a form of alchemy. It explores this on the abandoned sites around White Bay, Glebe Island and Roselle in Sydney.

The book argues that marginal landscapes that challenge are essential for a rounded childhood. They are also important for a balanced adult life. We have increasingly protected ourselves from engaging with disturbing places, as we foster the culture of forgetting through consumerism and spectacle in our cities. But these uncanny places will not allow us to forget because they have important messages. We need to release ourselves from the cottonwool protection of current urban life and be brave enough to engage in the particular qualities of marginal lands. Not only are these places beautiful, they are also places that can encourage us to develop a different sustainable future, as engaged citizens who are innovative, caring, and unwilling to slip into complacency.

Helen Beatrice Armstrong (2016) *Marginal landscapes*, 318 pp. Publication was supported by AGHS's Kindred Spirits Fund. The book is available free at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/marginal-landscapes/id1146329496?mt=11>.

Landscape architect **Dr Helen Armstrong** was the Inaugural professor of landscape architecture at Queensland University of Technology 1997–2003, and is now an emeritus professor. She has been a visiting scholar at numerous overseas universities. Her work is widely published.



The Australian Garden History Society promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities.